

## Christmas Joy

Luke 2:8-20

Let's define the word joy. Joy can be an acronym- Jesus, Others, and then Yourself. Joy can also be defined as peace beyond your circumstances because of Jesus Christ. Both are pretty good definitions of joy. The circumstances weren't great, the Jewish people were under Roman rule, yet the world was experiencing a time of peace "The Pax Romana" a 200-year long period of Roman peace and expansion. The situation wasn't ideal for Mary and Joseph, they had to have their child, the King of Kings, in a shed-type barn stall.

**An Encouraging Joy (Luke 2:8-14)** This is a joy founded on God's Word. How comforting and encouraging was this message? Terrified shepherds, fearing for their lives, are given the message of hope and joy for all of humanity, that on that very day was born the Savior of mankind, Christ Jesus. I'm doubtful that any of the Shepherds knew a lot about Isaiah's, Micah's, or Zechariah's prophecies of the coming Messiah, but God chose the lowest class of people to reveal the most important message ever! This message of joy was prophesied by Isaiah 700 years before it happened! That's joy! Joy is that regardless of who you are or what you've done, you can be saved by Jesus! He came in the form of man to save sinners like us! That is joy! Look again at verse 10: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." Who was this inspirational message for? For kings, the rich, the well-to-do? No, for all people! It is the same message today, an inspirational message for all people. Christ came as a child, was crucified for our sins, conquered death, commanded disciple making, and is coming back for His Bride, The Church! This message of inspiration was given to the lowest social class of that day, yet purposeful so that only God gets the glory! This same joy comforts us and inspires us today. Paul shared in Romans 10:17 "***So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.***" This inspirational word moves us today! Look at verse 11. The phrase: "who is the Messiah." This is the only time in the Gospels that this phrase is used. Verse 11 is the only time in the Gospels in which Savior, Lord, and Messiah is used all together. We may glaze over this as seasoned believers, but imagine an unbeliever whose eyes and heart is opened by the Holy Spirit upon reading this phrase. They had waited, now they can truly worship as a result of the inspiration of the Word!

**An Evangelistic Joy (Luke 2:15-18)** This joy ignited and fueled witnessing. The shepherds went to witness! These despised men hear the most wonderful thing about how this joy comes. It came through the birth of a Savior! We will naturally share what we are most excited about and what we are most thankful for! The joy that the Shepherds felt caused them to leave where they were to share with everyone the message of hope in Jesus Christ! The question we must ask ourselves today, are we so joyous that what Christ has done in our lives has caused us to share with others? If you truly believe Jesus is the only way and the only one who can save you and if He has, wouldn't you be ignited to share Him? Acts 1:8 "***But you will receive power***

***when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”***

**An Everlasting Joy (Luke 2:19-20)** A Joy that is focused on Christ-Centered worship. How do you know if you really enjoy or appreciate something or someone? You talk about that item or person often. To praise Christ should be our continual lifestyle of worship. Are your affections on Christ? Do not allow the world to impact your joy, make an assault on the world through the Word of God and allow that to be your impacting joy for a lifetime. Mary treasured all of these things in her heart, the shepherds praised God for all they had seen and heard. This is an everlasting joy, a joy that isn't circumstantial, the joy that only a relationship with Jesus Christ can bring!